

8011

MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR

CHERRY CREEK

AREA OF CRITICAL ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERN
(ACEC) & Research Natural Area (RNA)

U. S. Department of Interior
Bureau of Land Management

UMPQUA FIELD OFFICE
COOS BAY DISTRICT - OREGON

Approved by:

/s/Ralph L. Thomas
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6-29-01
Date

INTRODUCTION

This document provides management guidance for the Cherry Creek Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) in the Umpqua Field Office. All prescribed management actions are in compliance with the *Final Coos Bay District Resource Management Plan* (USDI, 1994a) and its *Record of Decision* (USDI, 1995), and the *Record of Decision for Amendments to Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management Planning Documents Within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl*, and its' *Standards and Guidelines for Management of Habitat for Late-Successional and Old-Growth Forest Related Species Within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl* (USDA; USDI, 1994b), and the *Record of Decision and Standards and Guidelines for the Amendment to the Survey and Manage, Protection Buffer, and other Mitigation Measures Standards and Guidelines* (USDA; USDI, 2001). This plan conforms with: the Aquatic Conservation Strategy (ACS) objectives described in the Standards and Guidelines (S&Gs, pp. B-9 through B-34) of the Northwest Forest Plan; the *Port-Orford-cedar Management Guidelines* (USDI, Oct. 1994c; and the *Noxious Weed Strategy for Oregon & Washington* (USDI, 1994d) and *Partners Against Weeds*, An Action Plan for the Bureau of Land Management (USDI, 1996).

Cherry Creek is also designated as a Research Natural Area (RNA). Also it is located in Late Successional Reserve (LSR) land use allocation and has some portion of its' acreage included in Riparian Reserves (RR). Additionally it is reinstated Oregon & California (O&C) railroad land and in a Tier 1 Key Watershed. Descriptions of these designations are listed below.

Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) - (designated in 1983 by citing Federal Land Policy & Management Act, 1976): "Areas within public lands where special management attention is required (when such areas are developed or used, or where no development is required) to protect and prevent irreparable damage to important historic, cultural, or scenic values, fish and wildlife resources, or other natural systems or processes . . ." (43 CFR 1601.0-5). To be designated an ACEC the value, resource, system, or process identified must be of "substantial significance ... this generally requires qualities of more than local significance and special worth, consequence, meaning, distinctiveness, or cause for concern" (43 CFR 1610.7-2).

Research Natural Area (RNA): The RNA designation itself is not tied to a particular law and each agency uses different laws and regulations to govern its use. BLM regulations state that for an area to be designated a RNA it must have one or more of the following characteristics:

- A typical representation of a common plant or animal association.
- An unusual plant or animal association.
- A threatened or endangered plant or animal species.
- A typical representation of common geologic, soil, or water features.
- Outstanding or unusual geologic, soil, or water features.

RNA designation is designed to prevent unnatural encroachments and activities which would directly or indirectly modify ecological processes (i.e. to preserve an area in an undisturbed state) with research

and education as the exclusive focus. Activities such as logging (including salvage) and grazing are strictly prohibited, unless it is a treatment of the natural features of interest. Physical improvements such as roads, trails, fences, and building are generally not allowed except those considered essential to proper research or educational use. Public use is generally discouraged. Maintaining trails in existence at the time of the RNA designation, depends on administrative units and determination of effects.

Reasons for RNA designation are:

- Provide baseline to compare results of human activities in similar environment.
- Provide opportunities to study natural processes in undisturbed ecosystems, including plant and animal species (particularly rare and endangered species).
- Provide a gene pool preserve for plant and animal species (particularly rare and endangered species).

Late-Successional Reserve (LSR) - (designated in 1994 by the Northwest Forest Plan): LSR's "are to be managed to protect and enhance conditions of late-successional and old-growth forest ecosystems, which serve as habitat for late-successional and old-growth related species including the northern spotted owl. These reserves are designed to maintain a functional, interacting, late-successional and old-growth forest ecosystem" (ROD Standards and Guidelines, C-1 #1)

Riparian Reserves (RR)- (designated in 1994 by the Northwest Forest Plan): Riparian Reserves were developed to restore and maintain the ecological health of watersheds and aquatic ecosystems contained within them (Standards and Guides, C-30). A component of the riparian reserves is the Aquatic Conservation Strategy (Standards and Guides, B-9). As a general rule, standards and guides for Riparian Reserves prohibit or regulate activities in Riparian Reserves that retard or prevent attainment of the Aquatic Conservation Strategy objectives.

Oregon and California Lands (O&C): The 1866 congressional act granting Public lands to the Oregon and California Railroad Company was revoked in 1916. These revested lands were placed under the General Land Office (GLO) with guidelines to dispose of them. The revenues from the sale of the timber and lands were to be divided among the federal government, Oregon, and the counties in which the lands were located. The results were disappointing so the Oregon and California Revested Lands Sustained Yield Management Act of August 28, 1937 was passed. This act called for implementation of a sustained yield cutting program. Lands could be used for grazing and recreation, but watersheds, wildlife, and other resources were to be protected. Receipts from sale of timber were still to be shared with the counties having O&C lands.

Key Watershed: Serve as refugia critical for maintaining and recovering habitat for at-risk stocks of anadromous salmonids and resident fish species. These refugia include areas of high quality habitat and areas of degraded habitat. Those with high quality conditions will serve as anchors for the potential recovery of depressed stocks. Those of lower quality habitat have high potential for restoration and will become future sources of high quality habitat with the implementation of a comprehensive restoration program.

Tier 1 Watershed: Tier 1 watersheds contribute directly to conservation of at-risk anadromous salmonids, and resident fish species. They also have a high potential of being restored as part of a watershed restoration program.

ACEC - QUICK REFERENCE TABLE

CHERRY CREEK - 590 ACRES - T27S, R10W, Sec. 17-20	
Land Classifications & Uses	RNA, ACEC, LSR, RR, O&C, and Tier 1 - Key Watershed
OHV status	Closed- “continue to manage as closed”
Leasable Mineral Entry Status	Open - (no surface occupancy)
Locatable-Salable Mineral Entry Status	Closed
Oregon Natural Heritage Ecosystem Cells (ONHP 1998)	Fills Coast Range Ecoregion, western hemlock Zone cells for western hemlock/oxalis and western hemlock/ rhododendron-Oregon grape. (Preserve, protect, or restore native species composition and ecological processes of the cell biological communities)
Designated Values	<p>RNA/ACEC/LSR/RR/Tier 1-Key Watershed - Preserve, protect, or restore native species composition and ecological processes of biological communities. Available for scientific study, research, and education, and may serve as a baseline to measure human impacts on natural systems. Exclude rights-of-way in this area, subject to valid existing rights-of-way and the exception of buried lines in rights-of-way of existing roads.</p> <p>Special Status Species - Critical Habitat for Northern Spotted Owls & Marbled Murrelets, & for T&E and special status plants.</p> <p>Natural System/Fish/Wildlife/Botanical - Extensive stand of mid 1700 birth date with remnant 435 year old trees of Douglas-fir, western hemlock, and western red cedar. Supports steelhead trout, sea run cutthroat trout, and resident cutthroat trout.</p>

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**CHERRY CREEK RESEARCH NATURAL AREA
AND
AREA OF CRITICAL ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERN**

Access: This area is located in Coos County, thirty road miles east of Coos Bay, Oregon. Paved or rocked roads surround three of the four sides allowing easy access to the edges of the reserve, even during rainy winter months. Two primary access routes exist, also, see attached map(s):

- Bottom access from the south: Go south on highway 101 from Coos Bay, take highway 42 exit into Coquille (12 miles). Take the Coquille Fairview highway to Fairview (9 miles). At Fairview take a right onto the Coos Bay Wagon Road and follow it to the Cherry Creek County Road (directly across from the Cherry Creek County Park entrance-7 miles) turn left (i.e. North) onto the county road and drive 2 miles to the beginning of BLM's Cherry Creek Mainline, road # 27-11-27.0, and drive an additional 3.5 miles to the Cherry Creek Big Tree Recreation Site, adjoining the reserve.
- Top access (i.e. on the north); Take highway 101 from Coos Bay, then take highway 42 into Coquille (12 miles). Take the Coquille Fairview highway to Fairview (9 miles). At Fairview take a right onto the Coos Bay Wagon Road and follow it (4 miles) to the Middle Creek Access Road # 27-11-29.0 and turn left. Follow it (7 miles) to the Burnt Mountain Access Road # 27-11-12.0. Turn right and cross the "S" bridge drive about 3 miles to the top of the reserve.

Acres: 590 acres.

Elevation: Approximately 600 feet to 1,480 feet, see attached map.

Land Use Allocation: Research Natural Area (RNA), Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC), Late Successional Reserve (LSR), Riparian Reserves (RR), Oregon & California lands (O&C), and Tier 1 Key Watershed.

Legal description: Sec. 17, W½W½SW¼ (40ac); Sec. 18, S½NE¼, SE¼, lots 5, 6, 7, 12, N½ lot 8 (420ac); Sec. 19, N½NE¼, N½ lot 1, SE¼ lot 1 (110ac); Sec. 20 W½ NW¼ NW¼ (20ac); T. 27 S., R.10 W., Willamette Meridian.

Background: The RNA lies between the north and south forks of Cherry Creek and ranges in elevation from 600' to 1,480'. It is bordered by ridges which are several hundred to a thousand feet higher in elevation than the highest point inside the RNA. This generally protects the area from prevailing wind storms and helps retain the area in its natural state. Annual rainfall varies from 60" to 80", mainly occurring October through March. Snow may occur at higher elevations, but melts in a relatively short time because of mild temperatures. Normal winter temperatures vary between 35-50°, dipping to 20° during extremely cold periods. Summer temperatures vary from 60 to 80°, up to highs of 100° during extremely hot periods. The birth date of the forest stand is in the mid 1700s with remnant 425 year old trees in the draws. The stand is considered an excellent site for the study of old-growth coniferous forest of a type which was once widespread on the sedimentary materials of the Coast Range in southwestern Oregon.

In 1965, under authority of Executive Order 10355 (May 26, 1952 - 17 F.R. 4831) the Secretary of the Interior, Stewart L. Udall, signed a public lands protective order (January 29, 1965, P.L.O. 3530 - February 4, 1965, 30 F.R. 1193/1194) establishing the Douglas-fir Natural Area.

Some time before 1976 an unofficial buffer zone totaling approximately 225 acres had been implemented around the 4 1/4 mile perimeter of the RNA. This buffer zone was designated as "regulated deferred status" meaning the timber within the buffer was conditionally available for cutting if the activity promoted or protected the RNA. The proposed buffer width varied from 200 to 1100 feet in width, and conformed to topographic and physical features. This unofficial buffer was consciously done away with during the analysis of the current district RMP.

Around 1977 the Oregon Natural Heritage Program (ONHP) identified the RNA for filling some terrestrial cell requirements for the Oregon Coast Range Province in the western hemlock Zone.

In 1979 the RNA was considered under a required wilderness review. The three main reasons the RNA did not meet wilderness criteria were:

- Size: Did not meet the minimum requirement of 5,000 acres (The RNA is only 590 acres, and the surrounding area was only an additional 950 acres).
- Roads: By 1979 over 500 acres of the previously identified 950 roadless acres had been logged. This decreased the acres of timbered land and increased road mileage.
- Land Classification: Did not meet the Public Domain land classification requirement. 900 acres, of the 950 acres surrounding the RNA, were classified as revested Oregon and California Railroad grant lands being managed for commercial purposes, and thus exempt from wilderness consideration. Of the remaining 50 acres, 10 consisted of a recreational site and 40 were a Timber Production Capability Classification (TPCC) withdrawal.

Consideration was given to revoking or modifying the boundaries of the RNA. Generally, specialists were against revoking the designation, but supported modifying the "legal" boundaries to watershed boundaries. Using watershed boundaries would be more protective, and permit monitoring/research of water quality, as "control" watersheds were not readily available.

In 1981, BLM proposed a district administrative withdrawal, under ORE 19291-A, Billing Code 4310-84, that the withdrawal made by PLO 3530 (1965) be continued in part for a 20 year period, pursuant to Section 204 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of October 21, 1976, 90 Stat. 2751, 43 U.S.C. 1714 (Federal Register/Vol 46, No. 49/ Friday, March 13, 1981 - 16734). It was this extension that changed the name from the Douglas-fir area to the Cherry Creek RNA. This 20 year district administrative withdrawal started with the 1985 signed District RMP.

The South Coast-Curry Timber Management Plan (Coos Bay District, MFP, 1983) identified the Cherry Creek RNA as a “core area” for the ecosystem diversity system as defined in the ROD.

In 1995, with the adoption of the Coos Bay District Resource Management Plan (USDI, 1995) the Cherry Creek RNA was also designated as an Area Of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC). As part of the analysis for the RMP the following information was recorded:

- Slopes by acreage: Steep side slopes including North Fork of Cherry Creek 128 acres; Steep slopes excluding North Fork of Cherry Creek 284 acres; and flats and slopes under 35 percent 178 acres.
- Aspects by acreage: North 207 acres, South 151 acres, West 132 acres, & East 100 acres.

History of Use: The area appears to be primarily affected by the forces of nature. Construction & maintenance of Burnt Mountain Road (27-11-12.0), located on the northern edge of the RNA, has influenced the slopes below within the RNA. Other major influences have resulted from the road construction and clearcut logging operations adjacent to the boundaries. The Big Tree Recreation Site is located on the southwestern edge of the RNA. The RNA itself has no roads, man-made structures, or trails (except a small part of a trail around the recreation area).

There is no evidence of wildfires occurring within the RNA for at least 220 years, nor evidence of catastrophic damage by windthrow or bark beetles. However a November 10, 1975 windstorm, resulted in windthrow in the RNA and an unofficial buffer zone between the RNA and the South Fork Cherry Creek. Management supported leaving the windthrow in the RNA, as natural and not likely to cause substantial insect damage, therefore part of natural processes to be studied by scientists, but the wind throw in the buffer zone were sold in a 1976 salvage sale.

The following shows some of the educational/research use the area has received:

- G. W. Carrol, University of Oregon, *Distribution and Role of Conifer Needle Endophytes*, 1978. (Coniferous needle fungi in the Pacific Northwest completed 7/3/75)
- Baseline water monitoring station 7/83 BLM, Or state, Coos Curry County Water Master
- NSO June 27, 1973, OSU Department Of Fish and Wildlife, Eric D. Forsman
- 924-2765 - Christen May Pacific Northwest Research Station (*Dynamics of wood delivered from geomorphic processes in upland forests of the Oregon Coast Range*, C. May and R Gresswell. Dept of Fisheries and Wildlife, OSU Corvallis
- A.W. Bailey, Oregon State University, *Forest Association and Secondary Succession*, 1966.

- Vicki Ursitti, 1990. *Riparian Vegetation and Abundance of Woody Debris in Streams of Southwestern Oregon*. Thesis from Oregon State University, Corvallis.
- Dave Hibbs (rip - OSU)
- Ben Fawver, of SWOCC, took spring field tours there, with his tree and shrub classes.

Primary Values: Fills two cells in the 1998 Oregon Natural Heritage Plan Oregon Coast Range Ecoregion western hemlock Zone. The western hemlock/oxalis cell and the western hemlock/rhododendron-Oregon grape cell.

As a Tier 1 Key Watershed it contributes directly to the conservation of at-risk anadromous salmonids, and resident fish species.

The forest is considered a healthy late serial stage Douglas-fir and western hemlock stand (i.e. the dominant age class is barely true old-growth in the classic sense, and not near climax). A variety of hardwoods, ferns, and coast brush abound. The RNA is classified as cover type 230 (Society of American Foresters 1954), and Type 2 Cedar-Hemlock-Douglas Fir Forest (Kuchlers 1964), and the western hemlock zone of Franklin and Dryness (1969). Terrain features vary from creek bottom with relatively steep side slopes to a series of ridge top flats. The result is several age classes of timber available for study in a variety of stand compositions, side slopes, and aspects.

The District Soil Survey done by Townsend and coauthors (1977) and the Coos County Soil Survey (Haagen, 1989) contain soil maps covering the RNA. The general soil classification indicates a typical Podzol soil group with an underlying sandstone parent material. The soils belong to the Tyee formation of the Middle Eocene Age (Peck 1961).

Much of the area is classified as unsurveyed suitable habitat for marbled murrelets and is designated as habitat for both murrelets and spotted owls. Roosevelt elk use the area and its surroundings heavily, influencing the understory communities. An opportunity exists to study the influence of browsing and trampling by elk on the structure and composition of vegetative communities. Elk trails provide the easiest means for traveling through the area. Heaviest elk use appears to be the broad ridge tops in the center and southern half of the natural area. Other mammals known to occur within the area are blacktail deer, Douglas squirrel, white footed deer mouse, and black bear.

There is potential habitat for Survey and Manage plant categories A and C. Two Special Status plant species known to exist in the ACEC are: *Poa laxiflora*, a #4 listing under the Oregon Natural Heritage Program which means that the species is of conservation concern but not considered threatened or endangered, and *Diplophyllum plicatum* a Survey and Manage category B liverwort and assessment species, all known sites are to be protected. Some botanical surveys were conducted in parts of this area by Dave Wagner and the LSR contract crew in 1999/2000

Streams within the RNA support steelhead trout, sea run cutthroat trout, and resident cutthroat trout.

Salmon are unable to use these streams due to a natural barrier located on the mainstem of Cherry Creek. ODFW conducted aquatic habitat surveys in August 1994 on the North Fork Cherry Creek, which flows through the RNA. These surveys showed riparian vegetation dominated by hardwoods with some large conifers, and substantial volumes of large woody debris and numerous debris jams. This tributary provides the coolest water temperatures and are critical to the restoration of water quality within the Cherry Creek drainage.

Management Objectives: (RMP page 38)

- Retain existing RNAs and ACECs that meet the test for continued designation. Provide new special areas where needed to maintain or protect important values.
- Provide for research and environmental education. Manage uses to prevent damage to the values that make the area outstanding.
- Maintain, protect, and/or restore relevant and important values.
- Preserve, protect, or restore native species composition and ecological processes of biological communities (including Oregon Natural Heritage Plan cells) in research natural areas. This area will be available for short- or long-term scientific study, research, and education and will serve as a baseline to measure human impacts on natural systems.

Management and Use Constraints:

- A. Aquatics: [including candidate or Threatened and Endangered (T&E) species] - As a Tier 1 Key Watershed it contributes directly to the conservation of at-risk anadromous salmonids, and resident fish species. There are several miles of streams within the RNA that support steelhead trout, sea run cutthroat trout, and resident cutthroat trout. Salmon are prevented from using these streams because of a natural barrier located on the mainstem of Cherry creek.

In addition to fish, the area's aquatic/riparian interface may provide habitat for as many as 16 riparian-associated amphibians (Johnson and O'Neil 2001 and BLM 1995). Three amphibians (tailed frogs, northern red-legged frogs, and southern torrent salamanders) have been documented in the ACEC. Other riparian species that may occur, providing that necessary habitat elements are present, include 132 species of birds, 54 species of mammals, and 13 species of reptiles (see Section T, Wildlife Habitat).

- B. Botany: (including S&M, and T&E) - Due to existing potential habitat for Survey and manage species and special status species, pre-disturbance surveys would be required (FSEIS, 2000) prior to any habitat disturbing activities. Botanical surveys have been conducted in selected

areas of the ACEC. Two Special Status species are known to exist. *Poa laxiflora* is a #4 listing under the Oregon Natural Heritage Program which means that the species is of conservation concern but not considered threatened or endangered, and *Diplophyllum plicatum* a Survey and Manage category B liverwort and assessment species documented in this area, all known sites are to be protected.

- C. Cooperative Management opportunities: Adjacent land owners will be provided a copy of the management plan and encouraged to provide additional protection.
- D. Cultural Resources: There are no documented cultural resource values in this ACEC. Any proposed ground disturbing activity within this area would go through standard cultural resource review and consultation with the appropriate Federally - recognized Native American tribes.
- E. Fire Management:
 - 1. Fire Suppression: Is to be done according to the current District Fire Management Plan.
 - 2. Fire Use: Is to be done according to the current District Fire Management Plan.
 - 3. Fuels Treatment: Is to be done according to the current District Fire Management Plan.
- F. Insects and Disease: No control of insects or diseases will occur, unless infestation or infection threatens adjacent forests or unless such control is conducted as a research activity. Remedial actions should include input from the Oregon RNA committee.
- G. Land Exchange/Sale/Acquisition: The Oregon RNA committee is on the NEPA mailing list and would be contacted for input on types of action affecting the RNA.
- H. Land Right-of-Ways/Access: If no other reasonable alternative exists, BLM can not legally prohibit the public from accessing or managing their lands.
- I. Minerals: The area is open for mineral leasing with no surface occupancy and closed to locatable/salable mineral.
- J. Non-native Plants and Animals: (including noxious weeds) - Introduction of non-native plants and animals is prohibited. Prioritize these areas to eliminate noxious weeds and non-native plants and animals.
- K. Other land Uses: Uses not identified in this plan could be permitted if they are compatible with the management objectives of the RNA/ACEC and the Coos Bay District Record of Decision

and Resource Management Plan (USDI, 1995). All land use proposals will be reviewed by BLM specialists and input sought from the Oregon RNA Committee.

- L. Publicity: The location and resources of the RNA/ACEC will be publicized in official, and scientific circles. Publicity directed toward the general public will be minimal and not designed to encourage public visitation (see recreation/special forest products).
- M. Recreation: (including visitor use and interpretation) - No recreational facilities will be developed within the RNA and overnight camping is prohibited. No person shall use, occupy, construct, or maintain facilities in a manner inconsistent with the purpose of the research natural area. Collecting rocks, plants/parts, and animals/parts (other than for approved research purposes) is prohibited. Motor bikes, horses, mountain bikes, recreational tree climbing, and exploding devices are prohibited.
- N. Research and Education:
1. Research Proposals: Researchers will submit written proposals to the Umpqua Field Manager, outlining objectives and study techniques. Proposals will be directed to the District Outdoor Recreation Planner for permits.
 2. Permits: Research and educational uses are by permit only. Permits will be routed to all resource specialists, who will stipulate specific use restrictions and responsibilities of the parties involved.
 3. Use Restrictions: Observational studies are favored by BLM. Study techniques will normally be of a nondestructive, non-consumptive nature. An exception to this will be the collection of voucher specimens, unless such collection might significantly reduce species population levels. Collecting will be carried out in accordance with Federal (50 CFR 17) and State (ORS 564) regulations concerning the collection of survey and manage, rare, threatened, or endangered species, and the specimens will be deposited in a public educational or scientific institution. No person shall use, occupy, construct, or maintain facilities in a manner inconsistent with the purpose of the research natural area. Felling of trees, extensive soil excavation, and modification of any part of the forest and/or its related ecosystems for manipulative research studies is not permitted.
 4. Compliance: BLM specialists will be designated by the Umpqua Field Manager and District Outdoor Recreation Planner to conduct periodic site review and coordinate with permittees to ensure compliance with permit stipulations.
 5. Research Reports: Upon completion of research projects, investigators will submit a final report to the District Outdoor Recreation Planner describing the results of the

project and disposition of collected specimens. Publications arising from this work will be included with the report or submitted when available.

6. Records: A permanent ACEC file is maintained in the District filing system, and should include copies of all research permits and related correspondence. Copies of research reports, and related publications are to be filed in the district library.
 7. Use Reports: Use reports, when received, will be forwarded to the Pacific Northwest Research Natural Area Committee.
- O. Silviculture: Silviculture practices will be considered as a tool to maintain, protect, or restore relevant and important ecological system processes of the biological communities, or in cases of catastrophic damage when the damage threatens adjacent forests or public safety (see fire, and insects and disease). All actions will comply with management directions described in the Coos Bay Resource Management Plan (USDI, 1995). Recommendations for remedial action will be sought from the Oregon RNA committee.
- P. Special Forest Products: No special forest product harvest for commercial or personal purposes is allowed in RNAs. However, specifically prohibiting use of this area in permits would adversely highlight the areas location. There is no known past or current use of this area, and the overall lack of access and steep topography generally discourages activity within this area.
- Q. Timber Management: This area is not available for planned silviculture and timber harvest activities, or road construction. Windthrow and other damaged timber will be allowed to decay as a natural part of the ecosystem process. Exceptions may be made to maintain, protect, or restore relevant and important ecological system processes of the biological communities, or in cases of catastrophic damage when the damage threatens adjacent forests or public safety (see fire, and insects and disease). Exceptions will comply with management actions/directions as described in the Coos Bay Resource Management Plan (USDI, 1995). Recommendations for remedial action will be sought from the Oregon RNA committee.
- R. Vehicle Use: This area is closed to motorized and non-motorized vehicle use except that required for emergencies or specifically authorized by BLM. Cherry Creek RNA is subject to valid existing rights and buried lines in rights-of-way of existing roads. Exclude rights-of-way in this area (see fire and timber management).
- S. Visual Resource Management (VRM): The RNA is classified as VRM 1, which preserves the existing character of the landscape, provides for natural ecological changes, and some very limited management activities. The level of change to the landscape should be very low and not attract attention. Adjacent government land (i.e. within .25 mile) is classified as VRM 3, which

allows moderate levels of change to the characteristic landscape. Management activities may attract attention but should not dominate the view of the casual observer. In both VRM Classes changes should repeat the basic elements of form, line, color, texture, and scale found in the predominant natural features of the landscape.

T. Wildlife: (including S&M, and T&E) -

Habitat Enhancement Projects: Enhancement projects would not be allowed unless needed to maintain, protect, and/or restore relevant and important values, or to preserve, protect, or restore native species composition and ecological processes of biological communities (including Oregon Natural Heritage Plan terrestrial and aquatic cells).

Special Status Species (SSS) Occurrence: The Coos Bay District Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan ([RMP]; May 1995) provides a list of Special Status Species (SSS) that may occur in the District. Some of these species may occur in the Cherry Creek ACEC. Much of the area is classified as unsurveyed suitable habitat for marbled murrelets and is designated as habitat for both murrelets and spotted owls. Proposed activities would require review by a wildlife biologist and may require compliance/consultation with the US Fish and Wildlife Service.

Northwest Forest Plan Survey and Manage Species (red tree voles): No red tree vole surveys have been conducted in this area. Activities would comply with the ROD for Amendment to the Survey and Manage, Protection Buffer, and Other Mitigation Measures Standards and Guidelines (USDA; USDI, 2001).

Coos Bay District Resource Management Plan buffer species: The Coos Bay District Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan (USDI, 1995) requires protective buffers around the nests of selected species, including great blue herons and certain raptors. No nests of these species have been documented to date within the RNA.

Game Species: Hunting and trapping is regulated by the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. While permitted within the RNA, the areas limited access, steep topography, and dense brush discourage heavy use. Consequently, it is unlikely that hunting and trapping occurs to the extent that it alters wildlife populations within the RNA. Common game species include Roosevelt elk, black bear, black-tailed deer, and ruffed grouse.

Implementation Monitoring: (Appendix L - ROD)

Monitoring Questions:

1. Are BLM actions and BLM-authorized actions/uses near or within the special area consistent

with resource management plan objectives and management direction for special areas?

2. What is the status of the preparation, revision and implementation of this area of critical environmental concern management plan?
3. What environmental education and research initiatives and programs are occurring in the research natural area?
4. Are existing BLM actions and BLM-authorized actions and uses not consistent with management direction for the area being eliminated or relocated?
5. Are actions being identified which are needed to maintain or restore the important values of the area? Are the actions being implemented?
6. Are protection buffers being provided for specific rare and locally endemic species and other species in habitats identified in the SEIS ROD?

Monitoring Requirements:

1. Annually, at least 20% of the actions and research proposals within and adjacent to the special area will be reviewed to determine if the possibility of impacts on ACEC values was considered, and whether any mitigation identified as important for maintenance of ACEC values were required. If mitigation was required, the relevant actions will be reviewed on the ground, after completion, to ascertain if the mitigation was implemented.
2. The annual Program Summary will address implementation questions 2 through 6.

Effectiveness and Validation Monitoring: (Appendix L - ROD)

Monitoring Questions:

1. Are the implemented management actions designed to protect the values of the special area effective?
2. Is the special area managed to restore or prevent the loss of outstanding values and minimize disturbance?

Monitoring Requirements:

1. The special area will be monitored at least every three years to determine if the values for which it was designated are being maintained.

2. When proactive management actions are implemented, they will be monitored annually for the first three years. After that, monitoring will occur every three years, or until objectives are met, in order to determine if these actions met their objectives.

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